WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for customizing advertising in an electronic publication, comprising:

storing a consumer profile in a database, the
5   consumer profile associated with a consumer and comprising a plurality of profile data items;

creating a database of content items and advertising items, at least some advertising items comprising targeted advertising items, each targeted advertising
10   item associated with an inclusion criterion, wherein a decision as to whether the inclusion criterion for a particular advertisement has been met depends upon the value of one or more profile data items;

creating an electronic publication for a particular
15   consumer, the electronic publication comprising at least some of the content items and at least one targeted advertising item where the inclusion criterion for that targeted advertising item has been met.

20   2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the profile data items include demographic items reflecting demographic data about the consumer;

wherein the profile data items include personal items reflecting personal data about the consumer; and
25   wherein the inclusion criterion for a targeted advertising item may depend upon the value of a demographic item, a personal item, or both a demographic item and a personal item.

30   3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the electronic publication further comprising at least one advertising item that is not a targeted advertising item.

4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining an order for the electronic publication from the consumer;

prompting the consumer, in response to the order, for information about the consumer, the information used to create the consumer profile;

receiving the information from the consumer; and

creating the consumer profile using the information.

5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining an order for the electronic publication from the consumer;

retrieving the consumer's consumer profile in response to the order;

prompting the consumer for changes in the consumer's consumer profile;

receiving changes from the consumer; and

updating the consumer profile based upon the changes.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the electronic publication comprises a plurality of pages and a targeted advertising item appears on at least one of the pages.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the electronic publication outputs an advertising item to a user of the electronic publication after the passage of a predetermined amount of time during which the electronic publication has been in use.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the electronic publication outputs an advertising item to a user of the electronic publication in response to the access of a specific content item.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the publisher of the electronic publication can designate an advertising item as suppressible or not suppressible by a user of the electronic publication.

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10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

giving a user of the electronic publication the option to order a product or service advertised in an advertising item;

10   electronically ordering the product or service in response to input by the user of the electronic publication.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising

15   downloading the electronic publication to a predetermined location associated with the consumer's computer.

12. A method for distributing an electronic publication, comprising:

retrieving an electronic publication from storage; and

5   delivering the electronic publication to a consumer by electronically sending the electronic publication to the consumer's electronic mail address.

13. The method of Claim 12, further comprising:

10   obtaining billing information from the consumer; and

billing the consumer in response to the billing information.

14. The method of Claim 12, wherein the electronic

15 publication is a periodical electronic publication that is published once in a predetermined period and wherein an order comprises a subscription for a fixed number of issues of the electronic publication, the delivering step further comprising:

20   delivering the electronic publication to the consumer during each predetermined period until the subscription runs out.

15. The method of Claim 14, further comprising:

25   generating a renewal notice indicating that the consumer's subscription will expire; and

sending the renewal notice electronically to the consumer's electronic mail address.

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16.   A system for distributing an electronic publication, comprising:

a computer network;

a consumer computer coupled to the computer network
5   and associated with a consumer;

a publisher computer connected to the computer
network and operable to retrieve an electronic
publication, and deliver the electronic publication to
the consumer by electronically sending the electronic
10   publication to the consumer's electronic mail address.

17.   The system of Claim 16, wherein the electronic
publication is delivered to the consumer in a compressed
format.

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18.   The system of Claim 16, further comprising:

an application running on the consumer computer, the
application operable to read the electronic publication
to the consumer by transforming text contained in the
20   electronic publication into audible sound.

19.   The system of Claim 16, further comprising:

an application running on the consumer computer, the
application operable to control the export of items of
25   the electronic publication.

20.   The system of Claim 16, the publisher computer
further operable to:

store a consumer profile in a database, the consumer
30   profile associated with the consumer and comprising a
plurality of profile data items;

store a database of content items and advertising
items, at least some advertising items comprising
targeted advertising items, each targeted advertising
35   item associated with an inclusion criterion, wherein a

decision as to whether the inclusion criterion for a particular advertisement has been met depends upon the value of one or more profile data items; and

create the electronic publication for the consumer, the electronic publication comprising at least some of the content items and at least one targeted advertising item where the inclusion criterion for that targeted advertising item has been met.

21. The system of Claim 16 wherein the publisher computer is further operable to receive an order for an electronic publication from the consumer, the order including the consumer's electronic mail address.

22. The system of Claim 21 wherein the order is received from the consumer electronically.

23. The system of Claim 21, wherein the electronic publication is a periodical electronic publication that is published once in a predetermined period and wherein the order comprises a subscription for a fixed number of issues of the electronic publication, the publisher computer further operable to deliver the electronic publication to the consumer during each predetermined period until the subscription runs out.